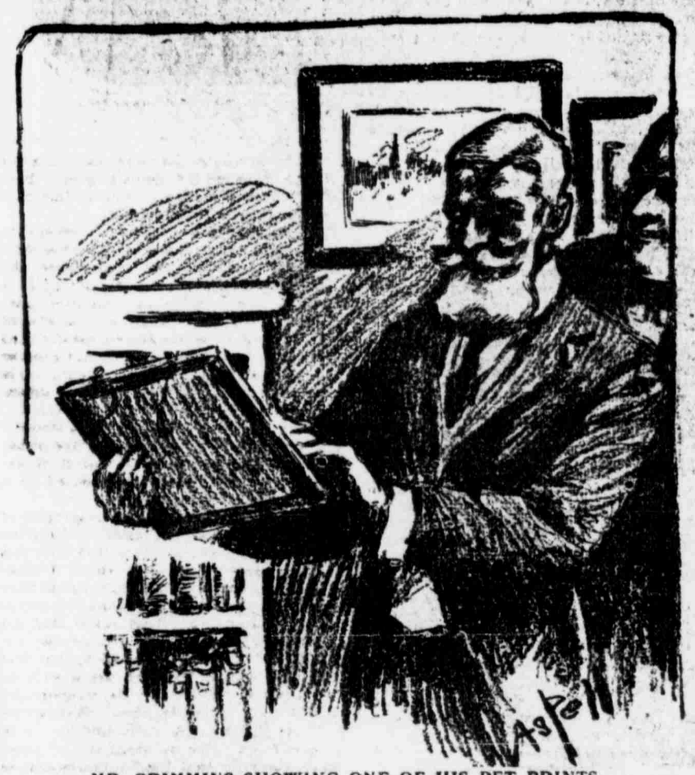
NEW YORK BETTER THAN EVER

JOHN D. CRIMMINS COMPARES OLD DAYS AND PRESENT.

Social and Physical Changes in the Nineteenth Ward in Fifty Years—More Chances Now for Young Men—Morals and Politics Better—Marry Young!

Any one who can persuade John D. Crimmins, bibliophile, Knight Commander of the Order of St. Gregory the Great by appointment of Pope Leo XIII. in 1901, director in half a dozen financial concerns, president or trustee of many philanthropic institutions, patron of museums, real estate dealer and incidentally a very busy man, to tell about some of the changes, social and physical, he has seen in New York and especially in the Nineteenth ward, bounded by Fortieth and Eighty-sixth streets, Sixth avenue and the East River is sure to be entertained. Mr. Crimmins is an interesting talker, and probably there is no man in New York who knows more about the history of the city.

He has a remarkable library about old New York which includes a large collection of prints, maps and drawings illustrating the city's topography, dwellings and customs and also hundreds of autograph letters of public officials and private citizens prominently connected with its social and civic history. In his house is a large room lined with early and rare editions of books describing New York in the making, together with many equally rare historical works relating to the Irish clans and the Gælic people from whom the Crimmins family traces its descent, some of the books being printed



MR. CRIMMINS SHOWING ONE OF HIS PET PRINTS.

in Gælic. It is easy to see that Mr. Crimmins prizes these books far more than the paintings and the bric-à-brac which give to some rooms of his house the aspect of a museum.

Mr. Crimmins has lived all his life in the same district, the fifty foot front, five story stone house he now occupies being within a stone's throw of the site of the plain, two story pointed roof, frame cottage on the old post road near Fifty-ninth street where he was born in 1844 and the scarcely less modest structure in which he and his bride went to housekeeping twenty-three years later. When asked if he would tell THE SUN a little about some of the physical and social changes which had impressed him most Mr Crimmins's alert business air gave way to a reminiscent expression as he said reflectively:

"My boyhood recollections date back distinctly fifty years, in which time I have seen marvellous changes in New York, especially in the Nineteenth ward. I have seen what we would call almost primitive conditions. In fact I can't picture any condition of people living in the country, except in unsettled parts, so far removed from the life of to-day as were our people in the '60s.

"Comforts as we know them we did not have at all. Our water supply was from pumps. Sickness was general, especially from fevers. There were few doctors, and fewof those skilled. Medicine was mostly herbs prescribed largely by druggists or made from old recipes. I remember bringing to my mother more than a quart of one and another herb decoction at a time. We did not know about bacilli or microbes or that our milk was contaminated.

"Few kitchens had stoves to bake in. Wood was the fuel, and loads of wood were huckstered through the streets, with the woodsawyer following. The butcher, the fish man, the oil man and the truck farmer made daily rounds, the fish man blowing his horn standing at a point on the road where he could be heard. I remember on one occasion an Irish servant lately landed making some fun for us by rushing over the fields excitedly when she heard the fish horn. Asked what was the cause of her excitement she gasped:

"'Sure, I heard the horn and I couldn't see the hounds.'

"The general topography of the Nineteenth ward," continued Mr. Crimmins, turning to gaze from his office window across Madison avenue, "had not at that time changed very much from nature. Our places of residence were fixed by wards.

"When I was a youngster old roads and lanes were well defined if not in use, some of the lanes leading from the Boston post road to the residences of the Kips, Buchanans, the two Beekmans, Lenoxes, Cuttings, Smiths, Pynes, Adriances, Towles, Emmets, Suttons, Schermerhorns, the three Joneses, Graces, Goelets, Brevoorts, Fishes, Lawrences, Provosts, Willets and Rikers, to name a few of the early owners. There were newcomers too, whose names now read among the old families. Just beyond the boundaries of the ward were houses owned by the first Astor, the Rhinelanders, Leiferts and others.

"There were plenty of ponds with lanes leading to their borders and almost any day you could see men shooting snipe and waterfowl unrestrained by troublesome game laws. The streams that drained the land east to the river and the bays extending inshore were all visible. Stone bridges crossed streams as far east as Third avenue, walls in places bordering avenues where the valleys on either side were deep.

"One of the interesting streams was lined with factories. For instance, just west of Lexington avenue and about Fifty-sixth street was the corduroy factory, and extending east along the Mill Brook till it entered the East River at Forty-ninth street were dye and other factories. The Kissing Bridge on the post road crossed the stream near the road leading to the Beekman mansion, Fiftieth street and the river.

"In the fields were occasional family burying places. Potter's field was located between the post road and the Middle road (now Fifth avenue) and Forty-eighth and Fiftieth streets. Cattle yards bordered Fifth avenue from perhaps Forty-second to Fifty-seventh street, and lines of drovers who had walked their cattle long distances could be seen trudging along on Sunday to be on hand for Monday's market. Tall Western men they were, wearing legged boots and carrying a staff. We boys used to scurry out to see them, for a day or part of a day at their heels meant an interesting experience for some of us.

"What was then called Hamilton Square extended from about Sixty-fifth to Sixty-ninth street, Fifth to Third avenue, and here the county fair was held for a good many years, the owners of estates showing a keen rivalry in exhibits of cattle and flowers.

"By the way, the base of a monument to George Washington was laid in this square, which suggests that perhaps some of the city officials of that day were more patriotic than far sighted; but no one, I guess, foresaw that one day almost every foot of that square would be taken up with dwellings of the wealthy.

"At the corner of Fifty-ninth street and Fifth avenue, where the Hotel Savoy now stands, was a remarkably good skating pond which was not put out of commission until along in the '60s. The favorite drive was the Boston post road, on which were located several taverns, Cato's being the most famous.

"I wonder who remembers Cato, the colored host? Frank Work and Benjamin Sparks could speak of him, I know, and maybe there are others.

"My father lived all of his sixty-odd years from his arrival in this country in 1836 in the vicinity of Fifty-ninth street and the Boston road, and when I was a small boy there had sprung up quite a little settlement on both sides of the road at Fifty-seventh street, and a little further east were a good many Quaker families, including the Hulls and the Browns.

"My acquaintance with the names of families came about in part by attending the only public school in the ward, located in Fifty-first street, and which was torn down when the new—now the old—ward school 18 was built. I was quite proud of the fact that I, with another boy, led the first file that entered the new school in 1853.

"At this time Central Park was just about beginning, no thoroughfare except Third avenue was macadamised, there were no paved sidewalks, no sewerage: a few oil lamps, occasionally lighted, illumined the roads at night and there was little protection for life or property, the policing of the ward being in the care of six men.

"I remember the first Jewish family that took up business in Third avenue. We boys coming home from school made a practice of peeking in his window to see the Jew. Afterward that Jewish family rose to some distinction in New York.

"In the ward at that time were many Dutch truck farmers, decent and good people.

"The Crystal Palace, Trinity Church and High Bridge were the principal show places of the city and no one dreamed of going so far as High Bridge unless he had a full day to spare.

"After the Germans began to come into the ward its population jumped up fast and its wealth increased greatly. Contractors found employment as estates were broken up and streets opened. By 1861 there was something of a boom on. It was checked by the breaking out of the civil war, but revived soon after the close of the war and soon made the Nineteenth ward one of the great parts of the city. In 1855 its population was only 17,000. To-day the taxable property within its confines is the greatest in volume in our city."

"In your opinion, Mr. Crimmins," asked the reporter, "are the morals and manners of to-day better or worse than those of forty or fifty years ago?"

"I maintain, no matter who differs with me, that generally speaking we have a higher idea of order and of morals to-day than we had half a century ago. To-day we hear more perhaps about individual and civic selfishness and vice because these shortcomings are promulgated by trumpet, so to speak. In the old days, in proportion to the population, there was more viciousness, some of it not even hidden, than now. Squalor then had no cover.

"We are better people now, more humane, more considerate of one another. There is far more brotherhood among us; we try harder to have fair dealings between capital and labor. If I should picture the increasing betterment of conditions for the working classes as I have seen them and make comparisons between existing conditions and those which prevailed before workmen organized unions, most people would shout that I was exaggerating.

"To-day equal justice without discrimination is dealt to all classes and on the whole the public's servants are distinguished by an increasing integrity. As we receive the vicious as well as the good from every part of the world there will be brought in among us necessarily people who would attempt to establish most hideous institutions, but no administration is responsible for that.

"To a person who has seen and have the wretched hovels of past years and the sanitary tenements of to-day, the question of whether the very poor are not better off now than they were forty or fifty years ago needs no other answer."

"Is politics more crooked now than when you were a youth?"

"On the contrary, it is far less crooked. Take election day for instance. There is no question about their greater fairness now.

"When I was a young man we had no registry law. Some men voted maybe twenty times or as often as there were voting booths in the ward. Ballot boxes were grabbed by force and the ballots counted in barrooms. Republican and Democratic leaders fixed up things beforehand as to which man should win.

"That was done the year I ran for Councilman on the Democratic ticket, and my experience in that campaign decided me to steer clear of further nominations for civic office. I have served, however, as Park Commissioner and president and treasurer of the board; as Presidential elector I was a member of the State constitutional convention in 1894 and of the Greater New York Charter Revision Committee appointed by Gov. Roosevelt."

"What was your experience in the campaign referred to?"

"Well, there were two candidates put up by the Democrats and one by the Republicans. I was one of the two Democrats and only 22 years old. For this reason I was a good deal surprised to have my father wake me up in the night to tell me I had been nominated.

"Contrary to expectations, it seems, I piled up so big a majority over the other Democratic candidate that after it was all over and the election of the Republican candidate was announced one of the Democratic leaders had the good nature to tell me:

"'Had we known how well you would run we would have let you get in.'

"We hear a good deal these days about crooked politicians, but there is no more graft now than when I was a young man and on the whole political conditions are very much better."

"Had not a young man more and better chances to make a living in your time?"

"No, most emphatically. Take for instance the real estate business. That was the day of large holdings by the wealthy and a great deal of New York was taken up with swamps and streams of water. People of small means were inclined to live in groups, and even after the large estates began to be broken up it was a good many years before there was a perceptible activity in buying small parcels of land.

"In other lines of business too young men had less choice then than now, less chance to learn of new openings, for the reason that they had fewer chances to meet and mingle with the socially prominent men. For instance, owners of estates with few exceptions transacted all their business at home. Their offices were in their houses.

"My father being a contractor, as a boy and youth I used to make business calls at many of the big houses and got a chance to learn among other things how uncomfortable some of these houses were. Seeing that I was keenly interested in the subject of real estate and building houses I was treated with more consideration often than were young men calling on other lines of business; but take it all in all the prominent families were far more exclusive than even our wealthiest people dream of being now.

"The middle class and the aristocracy did not mingle at all. Business was not specialized and systematized as it is now, consequently there were fewer openings for very young men. It is easier now for an ambitious young man to get a hold and forge ahead than at any previous time in the history of New York.

"Apropos of the great families of that day, one of the most marked social changes to my mind is indicated by the change in the style of entertaining and the greater liberality in spending money, which relatively is far ahead of the increase in the size of fortunes. When I was young those accounted wealthy were often the most careful spenders. Men, and women too, seemed to hate to part with a dollar.

"Personally I knew rich men who would walk blocks and blocks to save a quarter, and in one and another big house I called at of an evening to see the owner on business the lights would be turned out before I got fairly out of the door if it happened to be a little late. This was to save gas. I distinctly remember that some of the most important families held out for several years against having gas because of the extra expense, which they could very well afford.

"No one was inclined to spend large sums in giving rival entertainments. Boast is sometimes made of the large private banquets of those days, when as a matter of fact a dining room large enough to hold many guests was an exception. This I know from personal observation. The new homes of New York's wealthy class include as a rule larger dining rooms than the old houses had.

"Private entertainments called extravagant then would show up very modestly if contrasted with the excess of splendor associated with modern New York entertainments, which splendor began to set in about thirty years ago. We had no great charities or charitable institutions in the early '60s, which is one reason, perhaps, why the rich had not formed the habit of dipping down into their pockets."

"Returning to the subject of young men, Mr. Crimmins, do you think in these days of high rents and inflated dress bills that men ought to marry young?"

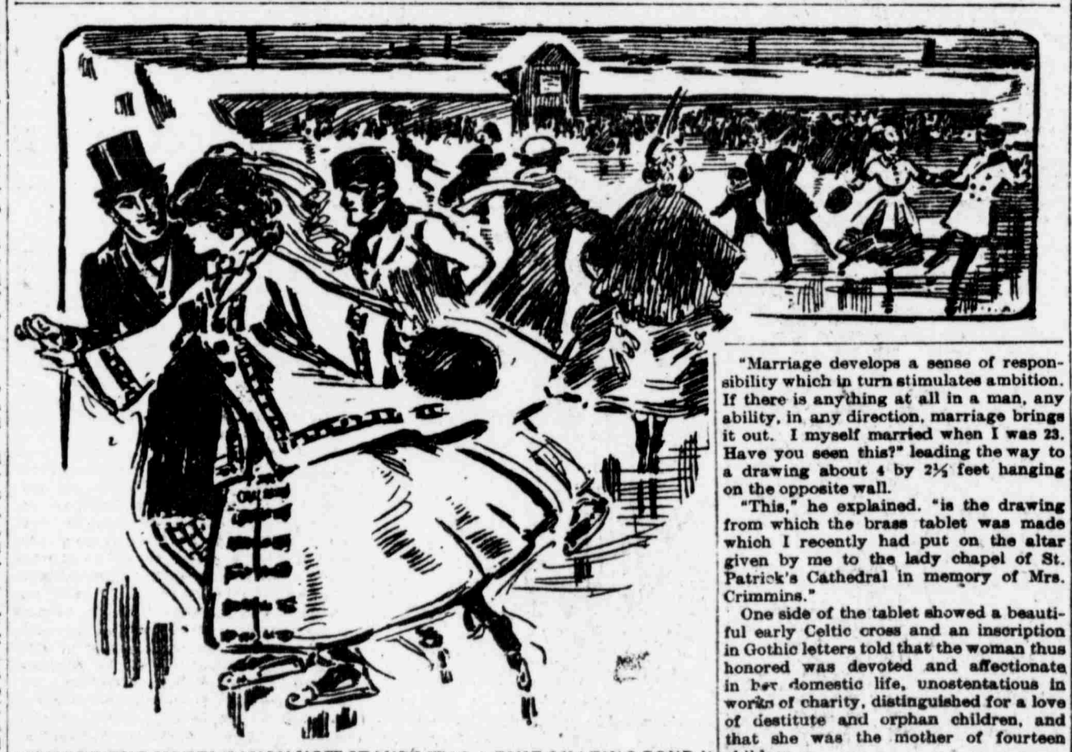
"Every young man with any business ability at all," answered Mr. Crimmins without an instant's hesitation, "ought to marry before he is 30.

"Marriage develops a sense of responsibility which in turn stimulates ambition. If there is anything at all in a man, any ability, in any direction, marriage brings it out. I myself married when I was 23. Have you seen this?" leading the way to a drawing about 4 by 2½ feet hanging on the opposite wall.

"This," he explained, "is the drawing from which the brass tablet was made which I recently had put on the altar given by me to the lady chapel of St. Patrick's Cathedral in memory of Mrs. Crimmins."

One side of the tablet showed a beautiful early Celtic cross and an inscription in Gothic letters told that the woman thus honored was devoted and affectionate in her domestic life, unostentatious in works of charity, distinguished for a love of destitute and orphan children, and that she was the mother of fourteen children.

"THE YOUNG MAN SHOULD MARRY."



"WHERE THE HOTEL SAVOY NOW STANDS WAS A FINE SKATING POND."

BOYS TAKE TO WIRELESS.

Young Operators Turned Out at the Brooklyn Children's Museum.

Miniature bicyles begin to appear about 4 P. M. on the porch of an unpretentious building—it looks like a dwelling—set back among the trees in the midst of a big lawn on Brooklyn avenue, Brooklyn. By 4:15 the stack of bicycles is so large that the entering visitor has scant room to pick his way to the door and within, where the owners of the wheels and many others are formed in a long line, curving in and out of doors through various rooms.

The building on the big lawn is the home of the children's museum, the only place of its kind in the world—which records an attendance of from 9,000 to 10,000 children a month and boasts that most of them are regular patrons.

In the office of the assistant curator, Miss Mary Day Lee, two boys were excitedly arguing the other day. The bone of contention appeared in the form of a double mirror which the lads hinged together at an angle of 90 degrees and the dispute was over the number of reflections that would be seen of an exposed article three or four. The upholder of three images cited his teacher at school for his authority, while he who favored four had his own teacher's name to flourish in defiance. Argument had evidently run high, but both had decided to bring the difficulty to Miss Lee.

"They all consider this a sort of supreme court of appeals," laughed that young woman, "and are perfectly willing to abide by the decision. Generally their problems are really problems worth while.

"Just now I discovered that two eminent authorities disagree on this very matter of reflected images and I shall have to work it out before I can give my decision to the boys. Last year I had a seemingly simple problem presented to me for solution by one of my lads. On tackling it I discovered that its seemingly simple appearance was deceptive and that it was too much for me.

"So I took it to one of the physical sciences professors at Teachers College, who in turn gave it up. It then passed through the hands of three of the professors of Columbia University, who worked at it in vain and that problem, naturally devised by a boy in his early teens, is still unsolved.

"Yes, it is a strenuous job being a supreme judge for these strenuous workers."

It is Miss Day who is largely responsible for the development of the wireless station, its apparatus and study, at the Children's Museum. When she went there four years ago a lad who had been collecting caterpillars, moths and other insects and bringing them to the museum ever since he was a little fellow began to cast inquiring glances at a heap of unused rubbish—Leyden jars, motors and other physical science apparatus.

"Let's rig up a wireless telegraph," he proposed to the new assistant.

"The proposition almost took my breath away," says Miss Lee, "for I was almost absolutely ignorant on the subject; but I hated to disappoint him and we started in to study and work together, although Austin was the more adept.

"The apparatus was all home made, but soon he had stations established so that he and other boys who had become interested could talk to the museum and to one another's homes. He became so proficient that he was engaged to go to Panama as a ship's wireless operator when he was only 17.

"He comes in to see us whenever he returns from his voyages, which have taken him to the Bermudas, the West Indies and England, and he tells of many tests of his ingenuity he has encountered at sea. Once he had to fix up a new apparatus with chemicals procured from the ship's doctor.

"Five others of our boys," continued Miss Lee, "are now holding excellent positions by virtue only of their experience here in spare hours out of school and on holidays with nothing but the apparatus they made themselves. One, a mere boy, is teaching the science to the naval reserves in New Jersey.

"Of course interest in the work has spread among the boys and last year 1,300 visits were recorded. However, the great majority of these were of a few boys who were genuinely interested, for here we daily see a practical illustration of what a boy will do when he gets an opportunity to follow his own bent, a place to work, appliances, books and encouragement.

"The place to work is limited, you see," said Miss Lee with a sweep of her hand around her little office. "This is nominally the business office of the assistant curator of this museum, but it was here that we first established our station and there is no other place for the boys to work, so I generally have to get through my business as best I may with all the way from three to a dozen boys buzzing away, hard at their own work and intermittently asking questions.

"And I must admit," she added with a smile, "I would be utterly lost without the accompaniment. I have grown so used to it. There are now fourteen or fifteen boys, some of whom are here every day, reading commercial messages with perfect ease. With our home made apparatus we have received messages from as great a distance as Tampa, Fla., and Washington and Wilmington are near neighbors.

"Just at present the office misses them, for the station is in temporary disuse as we are waiting to put in some more advanced, not home made apparatus. No doubt the results will be far more satisfactory, but, do you know, I fancy some of the boys resent a trifle the idea of this foreign intrusion into our little domain which has been hitherto entirely of our own making."

Dog Saved Woman From Bull.

Rockford correspondence Chicago Tribune.

Attacked by a maddened bull which she was trying to drive into an enclosure on her farm near this city, Mrs. George Cook was saved by the family dog from being gored to death.

The first rush of the bull hurled Mrs. Cook to the ground, breaking her left arm near the elbow.

Her young son, hearing her cries, came with the dog, which, seeing its mistress prostrate, made a furious attack on the bull.

While the animals were fighting Mrs. Cook managed to make her way to a fence, over which she climbed to safety.

L'ORGANISTE.

A West Indian Song Bird That Will Not Live in Confinement.

A New Yorker and a newly made acquaintance from abroad were walking in lower Sixth avenue. The foreigner was a Haytian patriot or soldier of fortune, whichever you choose to call him, at all events temporarily an exile in New York. The New Yorker had made his acquaintance in a place of refreshment which of late years has become a rendezvous for the writers and artists who live in that quarter of the city. The Haytian had strolled in and had made himself interesting.

He had described the tyranny that oppressed his island republic in voluble broken English elucidated by strange Latin gestures. Later he had expressed a wish to see the points of interest in New York. The New Yorker had offered his services as a guide.

Suddenly the Haytian stopped short and grasped the New Yorker by the arm.

"Sacré nom!" he exclaimed, "did you hear zat?"

"What? Where?" the New Yorker asked, mystified.

"Over zere in ze leettle bird store. It is l'organiste."

The pair stood on the sidewalk and listened, and presently above the clatter of trucks on the cobble stones, the harsh rumble of the elevated railroad, the New Yorker heard a tremulous bird note, protracted and marvellously sweet. It was an overtone that the Haytian's keener and fresher ears had detected in the confusing clamor of the city.

"Yes, it is l'organiste," he said excitedly, "Ze bird sat cannot be caged. How came he here to zis mad New York?"

They hurried across to the little store. The New Yorker too had been in the West Indies and the song he had just heard had brought the past back to him with a rush. He was almost as excited as his companion when the bird that perched with ruffled plumage in a brass cage in the window came in view. It was indeed l'organiste, or, as the New Yorker had heard it called, the solitaire. They tried to buy it from the wizened old man who kept the place, but he shook his head.

"I would not hurt my reputation by selling it to either of you," he said. "That bird will not live three days. I am the only man who ever brought a specimen to New York, and all that I have experimented with have died. This one is pining away already. Oh, yes, the're exquisite songsters and would make popular cage birds if they would live, but they cannot stand confinement."

It was an interesting subject, and the bird fancier, the Haytian and the New Yorker exchanged notes for the better part of two hours. At the end of that time they had arrived at the following facts:

When a visitor arrives in Hayti, Jamaica or any of the other West Indian Islands it is as likely as not that he will be asked "Have you heard the solitaire?" or "Have you heard l'organiste? No, well, I thought not, but don't return home before you do. You'll miss the treat of your life if you miss that."

The visitor may regard this as exaggeration or local pride, but it does not take him long to change his mind. Many are those from northern countries who have gone into raptures over this singer that cannot be caged and is in consequence little known outside of its native islands.

The song of the solitaire is neither elaborate nor varied. It might even be termed a whistle or pipe, for the bird only utters one protracted note, a single minor chord that beginning low down flows toward the listener with ever increasing strength until it reaches its climax and dies dreamily away.

Between chords there is a long pause, then suddenly it strikes upon the ear once more, occasionally in another key altogether. A second bird replies, then a third, and across the intervening space they seem to speak to each other in their own language.

But if it is a pleasure to listen to one or two solitaires, it is impossible to describe the effect produced when a dozen or more gather in some quiet glade and sing in chorus. Often before the note of one bird has died away another will reply in such perfect tune with its predecessor that it is like some strain from a beautiful anthem. And so they sing on; each independently, yet without seeming to clash, and at times achieving some extraordinary combinations of melody.

Some one has described it as "the sweetest, the most solemn and most most unearthly of all the woodland singing that I have ever heard" and it would be difficult to find a better expression of the sensation of pleasurable sadness with which this minstrel fills the heart of the listener. Had the West Indies been peopled by an imaginative race, a wealth of legend would undoubtedly have sprung up round the solitaire.

The habits of this bird are interesting. As its name suggests, it is of a retiring disposition, haunting the dark recesses of the forest and seeming to avoid the gaze of other living creatures. In this it is materially aided by its dull blue plumage, relieved only by a dash of orange at the throat, and should some curious wanderer be fortunate enough to catch sight of it as it sits on a bough or flits from tree to tree it would be difficult for him to believe that so insignificant a creature could be the author of the songs that had held him entranced.

In Hayti the bird is known as l'organiste, and in some of the other islands as the musician. In St. Vincent it is called the Soufrière bird, on account of its being met with only on the wooded slopes of the volcano and even at the very brink of the crater.

In 1902, when the eruptions of Mont Pelée and La Soufrière occurred, most of the solitaires in St. Vincent were destroyed and the few that escaped were driven to seek shelter in the low lying woods of the island. At first it was feared that they had been exterminated, but in a short while their mysterious singing was heard again among the ruins of the scorched and blackened hill country. With the persistence of most wild creatures the survivors had returned to their old haunts, and it is likely that in a few years the Soufrière birds will be as numerous in St. Vincent as before the eruption.

Very little scientific information regarding the habits, &c., of this bird has been so far collected. It has been said that the Haytian organiste is a different variety from the solitaire of Jamaica; and in Page Dupretz's "History of Louisiana" a description is given of a small bird known as the bishop, the habits and appearance of which are similar to those of the West Indian singer, and with which it has been more than once stated to be identical.

WANTED THE VALUE KNOWN.

Shipper Didn't Object to Having the Girl Know What Gift Cost.

A young man brought a package into the main office of an express company on lower Broadway the other day and asked the receiving clerk to send it to a town up State.

The clerk weighed the package and then asked the young man if he desired to declare the value of it. The young man said he would and put the figure at $75. Then the clerk marked in a corner of the package in very small letters "V75."

The young man asked the meaning of "V75."

"That is the abbreviation of value $75," said the clerk.

"But why do you print it in such small letters in an out of the way place?"

"Because most folks do not care to have the value marked in letters that will attract attention," replied the clerk.

"Well, I tell you, if this was just an ordinary package I would not care," said the young man, "but the truth is that this is a present I am sending to my intended up State, so if it is agreeable, will you kindly mark that 'V75' in big letters up near her name, where she'll be sure to see it?"

BLUE AND ORANGE CLOTHES

A WINDFALL FOR THE POOR AFTER THE CELEBRATION.

Thousands of Yards of Hudson-Fulton Bunting Given Away—Tenement Dwellers and Institutions the Gainers —Disposal of the City's Decorations.

What becomes of the bunting that drapes a city upon festal or solemn occasion, of the hundreds of thousands of yards of materials that festoon its public buildings?

Orphan asylums, homes for the helpless, religious institutions and the city's poor can tell in part.

Dutch colors are having a vogue on the East Side. In certain parts of First avenue especially costumes of blue and orange brighten the thoroughfare and draperies of those hues adorn homes.

For the sightseer the Hudson-Fulton celebration has become a thing of the past. To many a charitable, benevolent or religious institution from the Battery to Tarrytown, to many a tenement in the metropolis and many a home in the Catskills the festival is a vital matter for present rejoicing. To these celebrations has just begun.

The poor within reach of Madison and Union squares carried away more than four miles of bunting given them by a single firm. It did not take the shopgirl long to rip apart triple widths of white blue and orange, cut into the goods and evolve clothing for children, shirts for men and dresses for women, to say nothing of the windfall of underwear and household linen obtained from the lengths of white cloth.

The City Hall contributed its quota of about 10,000 yards of separate colors, stitched in triple widths, so that every man and woman who eagerly held on a section of the fabric as it fell from the hands of workmen engaged in removing the decorations secured three colors for domestic uses.

They would have liked to capture the 500 flags also, but these and some of the interior draperies were hauled away by the contract decorator, who had 100 drays rumbling over the streets far into the small hours of the night, depositing flags during the two weeks occupied in putting up decorations and collecting them in the forty-eight hours devoted to their removal.

On First avenue, where there is a large decorator's warehouse, people with a fancy for bunting secured it with little effort. Families who possessed children—and on First avenue few are poor in this respect—allowed them to watch for the arrival of drays loaded with Manhattan's cast off draperies. These were unloaded quickly, and every man, woman and child bore away from the vicinity of the warehouse as much material as he could carry. Like ungainly animated bundles these people appeared as they bobbed along the street enswathed in blue, orange and white.

The city government made use of about 10,000 yards of triple colored bunting, nine feet in width, or 30,000 yards of the average three foot size. A good many garments can be cut out of 30,000 yards of cloth, and Father Knickerbocker smilingly reflected that his contribution, so to speak, was not a yard in the bale that went for this purpose.

Even the mile or so of hemlock roping with which the city's green garlands were wrought meant a good deal to some families in the mountains along the upper Hudson. Five and ten cents a yard evergreen rope is sold for. At five cents a yard the city paid out $250 for its garlands.

There is no computing the cost of the thousands of cheap pennants used lavishly in decorations. For these and bunting alone hundreds of thousands of dollars were expended during the Hudson-Fulton celebration, independent of the stock of national colors held in reserve by every shop and almost every office and hotel building in New York.

Some lengths of bunting in national colors were given away at the close of the celebration, but most material of this kind is kept for further use. Decorators also folded and stored quantities of the Hudson-Fulton colors, the blue to be employed in sky ceiling effects and the orange and white for decorative purposes.

It will be some time before girls are through ripping off the initials H-F from shields and pennants so that when occasion for use arises they may be used with some other form of adornment in the centre.

Each big department store has its circle of favored institutions to which bunting and sometimes other decorations are sent. Black, white, dark blue and purple wool buntings especially are eagerly sought by certain institutions, and the number of garments furnished in this way by store draperies to institutions cannot be computed.

Each shop designates the objects to be benefited by its castoff adornments and the store decorator takes charge of the removal of thousands of yards of material so that its value will not be decreased by injuries to the fabric. He has it packed and hauled to its destination, and according to its quality and color it goes into clothing for infirm or invalid men and women and hundreds of orphans, or into curtains and draperies for their homes and asylums.

Churches receive quantities of such supplies from certain stores. Some of the cloth goes to the poor of the parish; the rest is used in the parish houses for decorations at fairs and entertainments where innumerable yards of such materials are needed, and for decorating the churches upon occasion.

Conspicuous among the Hudson-Fulton decorations were plaster casts, the making of which gave profitable employment to numbers of persons. A good many plaster casts were used by stores, some of which have put the images on sale. Other shops sent theirs to day nurseries, orphanages and settlements, to which places they often send posters of unusual beauty which they have brought out for special occasions.

WHISKEY BAD FOR THE VOICE.

Caruso Says So, but Does Not Condemn Use of Light Wines.

"I wonder how many times during the last few years I have been asked whether I consider intoxicants injurious to a singer's well being," writes Caruso in the *Strand*. "Certainly hundreds and probably thousands.

"In Italy we habitually drink the light wines of the country with our meals and surely are never the worse for it, though it is impossible to give advice generally, for so much depends upon the individual.

"I am inclined to condemn the use of spirits, whiskey in particular, for it is sure to inflame the delicate little ribbons of tissue which produce the singing tone.

"With regard to a singing diet I incline toward the simpler and more nourishing kinds of food, though my tastes are broad in the matter. Still, on the nights when I sing, except perhaps for a sandwich and a glass of my native Chianti, I take nothing until after the performance, when I have a modest supper of anything which I happen to fancy and which I have proved has no ill effects on me. Experience has taught me that it is by no means easy to lay down any hard and fast rule.

"As far as smoking is concerned, although in moderation I find that the practice is not injurious to me, yet all young singers I would warn against it. Still many great singers have been most inveterate smokers. Mario, for instance, was an inordinate smoker and apparently it did him no harm, for he smoked from twenty-five to thirty ordinary sized cigars a day, and in Italy, where real Havana cigars are rarely obtainable, he frequently smoked as many as a hundred Cavours a day."